

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. What is the order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is considering S. 601.

Mrs. BOXER. We are working on our finite list, and we expect to make our unanimous consent shortly.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. While we have some down time on the floor to wait for the 2:30 hour—I believe we are going to have some action on the WRDA bill, which is very important—I thought I would take this time to talk about an amendment I have pending on the WRDA bill. It is an amendment that I offered for myself, Senator VITTER, Senator SCHUMER, and Senator MENENDEZ. Several other Senators have expressed their strong support over the weekend on both sides, Republicans and Democrats.

There are many States in the Union, and Louisiana is only one—the State of Florida, the State of California, the State of Mississippi, the State of Alabama, other coastal States and, yes, some inland States—that are going to be terribly disadvantaged if the Landrieu-Vitter amendment does not pass on the WRDA bill. What is going to happen because of a reform bill—parts of it were necessary, but there were some parts that, in my view and in the view of many Senators, should never have passed as part of the flood insurance reform bill.

The reason some of us are fairly exercised about this is the bill itself, the reform bill to reform the Flood Insurance Program of the United States, never came to this floor for debate. It

came out of the Banking Committee, and then it was basically tucked into a larger omnibus bill, which happens sometimes. This is not the only or the first time it has happened. It is very unfortunate that it happened with this bill.

In our haste and in our good intentions to try to put national flood insurance on a more even financial keel, we have put the ability, unfortunately, in this bill for flood insurance rates to go up 20 percent a year on hundreds of thousands of first homes in this country—not second homes, not vacation homes, but first homes. The Landrieu-Vitter amendment doesn't try to solve this whole problem on the WRDA bill. It is going to take a little bit of work, which we can do, working together in good faith on behalf of our constituents.

This is big government at its worst—passing a reform bill and making the cure worse than the disease. In this case, for my constituents and for constituents in Florida, Mississippi, California, and New Jersey, we would have taken the disease as opposed to the cure. The cure is going to kill us. We weren't sure about the disease, but the cure is going to kill us.

Our papers have been editorializing for days since this issue has come to the surface on the WRDA bill. Our largest newspaper or second largest newspaper editorialized this morning and spoke about a quite senior woman—in her eighties—who lives with her daughter, who is in her sixties, in Plaquemines Parish. It is very typical to have families of different generations living together. They were in Plaquemines Parish before the flood insurance measure was ever passed.

We were living in Louisiana before this Nation was a nation. Our people have been down there a long time living on this water. They built their houses centuries—not this couple, but we had houses built centuries before this bill was ever passed. Now, what the law—the cure that is going to kill us—says is that this is their choice: They can elevate their home 18 feet, which probably would cost \$50,000, which they don't have, or their flood insurance will go up to something on the order of \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year, which they can't pay.

One may say: That is too bad. Let them sell the house.

Their house has no value.

This is a dilemma not just for the people of Louisiana but for people from Mississippi, Alabama, California, and New York. We have a solution. The solution I have offered is temporary until we can be smart and think about how to fix this, and it doesn't cost anything.

I am begging Members to allow us this short period of time to get this cure corrected. We can find a way to make this program balance. We don't have to do that today, at this moment. Give us a little breathing room to figure this out. I believe this program

could be self-sustaining. I am not an expert on insurance, but I am very fortunate to serve with colleagues who are. I am sure we can put our heads together and come up with something better than what is coming down like a firehose out there on lots of people in communities in Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

My understanding is—the managers are not on the floor—that there are about eight or nine amendments that have been worked out, hopefully, on both sides of the aisle. One of them is the Landrieu-Vitter fix, the flood insurance amendment that has zero cost to the taxpayer—zero. It is a temporary reprieve of rates going up for grandfathered homes, which affects many people in Florida, Louisiana, and in other States as well. It has a zero score. The CBO has testified. We have letters from CBO.

Please give our people this breathing room. I promise that I will work in good faith.

There are probably a few other things that need to be fixed in this flood insurance bill as we find a better way to lower costs to the taxpayer and to provide opportunities for people to live on a mountaintop if they choose, in a valley or on the coast, but to be safely sustainable. We all need to work together as a country. We can find an affordable way for our people—and not just millionaires—to be able to live on the coast. We have to make room for our fishermen, our agriculture, our farmers, and our aquaculture folks who have invested a good amount of money in helping to build more sustainable fisheries for our Nation. We have people who have to live near the water for commerce and trade. Not everybody lives by the water to vacation. Some people live by the water to work, which is an essential part of the work to keep this country moving forward. We have to figure out a way to allow them to do that in an affordable manner without completely undermining the coastal counties of our country.

Senator SCHUMER is on the floor now with some others who also have been working. I thank them for working over the weekend. Let's help them get this list of amendments cleared. One of those amendments will be the Landrieu-Vitter amendment on fixing temporarily—giving some reprieve to thousands of homeowners who are desperate for a signal from us that we get it, we understand. We didn't correct this appropriately. We are going to respond, as a democracy should, and give them a little signal today that as the WRDA bill moves forward, we can fine-tune and modify this flood insurance reform.

I understand we are ready for action on WRDA.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.